

Is Mixed-Income Development an Antidote to Urban Poverty?

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Abstract

I critically assess the potential for mixed-income development as a means of helping lift families in U.S. inner cities out of poverty. I identify four main propositions for the promise of mixed-income development, provide a conceptual framework that delineates the pathways through which mixed-income development can be hypothesized to improve the quality of life for the urban poor, and review the evidence from existing research on the relevance of these propositions. Because of the scale and possible elimination of the HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) program, I pay particular attention to what we have learned from it.

The most compelling propositions are those that do not rely on social interaction to promote a higher quality of life for low-income residents and instead predict benefits through greater informal social control and higher-quality goods and services. I consider the limitations of this strategy and policy implications for future mixed-income development.

Keywords: Community development and revitalization; Low-income housing; Poverty

Introduction

Mixed-income development¹ is becoming increasingly popular in cities across the United States as a means of revitalizing urban areas and transforming public housing (Bohl 2000; Boston 2005; Briggs 1997; Brophy and Smith 1997; Epp 1996; Goetz 2003; Khadduri 2001; Popkin et al. 2000, 2004;

¹ Mixed-income development ranges from private-sector, market-rate developments that include a small percentage of affordable housing to developments built exclusively for moderate- and low-income families. Like Brophy and Smith, my interest in this article is any development or community initiative where the mixing of income groups is a “fundamental part of [the] financial and operating plans” (1997, 5). My focus here is on mixed-income developments built in inner-city locations as a means of attracting middle-income residents and revitalizing surrounding areas.

Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn 1998; Schwartz and Tajbakhsh 1997; Smith 2002; Turbov and Piper 2005a; von Hoffman 1996). A primary rationale for mixed-income development is that it is a way to reverse decades of racial and socioeconomic segregation in urban America. The negative effects of highly concentrated inner-city poverty have been well documented (Jargowsky 1997; Massey and Denton 1993; Wilson 1987, 1996).

In an earlier work (Joseph, Chaskin, and Webber 2006), my coauthors and I examine in detail the theoretical basis for the mixed-income development strategy. This article builds on that work with an eye to providing a much more concise and policy-oriented assessment of the potential for mixed-income development as a means of confronting urban poverty. I am particularly interested in trying to better articulate the possible impact of mixed-income developments on low-income families. Why do we expect mixed-income development to promote a higher quality of life and upward mobility for low-income families? How might specifying our expectations for the benefits of this strategy more clearly inform current policy debates on how best to invest in housing for poor families?

Although thousands of units of mixed-income housing have been built and occupied across the country, it is still not clear exactly what policy makers expect mixed-income development to accomplish and how. Several studies have made important contributions to our understanding of mixed-income development (Briggs 1997; Brophy and Smith 1997; Epp 1996; Khadduri 2001; Khadduri and Martin 1997; Kleit 2005; Mason 1997; Popkin et al. 2000; Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn 1998; Schwartz and Tajbakhsh 1997; Smith 2002; Turbov and Piper 2005a). Yet, as Schwartz and Tajbakhsh assert, until we can develop a better understanding of why mixed-income housing should work and how well it actually works, “advocacy of mixed-income housing will be based largely on faith and on dissatisfaction with the previous thrust of low-income housing policy” (1997, 81).

In part, mixed-income development is a policy response to a growing consensus about some of the key factors that have generated unprecedented levels of urban poverty since the mid-1970s. Wilson (1987) described a new urban poverty characterized by the geographic concentration of high rates of joblessness and welfare dependency; high proportions of female-headed households, out-of-wedlock births, and teen pregnancies; and high levels of social disorganization, violence, and crime in certain neighborhoods. Several explanations have been offered for these trends, including a “skills mismatch” created by the restructuring of the U.S. economy from a largely manufacturing one to an information- and service-based one; a “spatial mismatch” created by the exodus of businesses to the suburbs; high levels of geographic racial segre-

gation; and persistent structural racism in employment, education, and the criminal justice system (Bell 1992; Darity and Mason 1998; Hacker 1992; Holzer 1991; Jencks and Mayer 1990a; Kain 1968, 1992; Kasarda 1983, 1990; Kirschenman and Neckerman 1991; Massey and Denton 1993; Pager 2003; Wilson 1987, 1996).

As a strategy to confront urban poverty, mixed-income development responds largely to one critical factor: the social isolation of the urban poor, in particular blacks. While positive in many ways, the loosening of racial discrimination in housing markets in the suburbs and other parts of cities in the 1960s and 1970s led to an exodus of black middle-class and working-class residents from urban neighborhoods. This exodus, it is argued, had very negative effects on the inner city (Jargowsky 1997; Jargowsky and Bane 1990; Ricketts and Sawhill 1986; Wilson 1987, 1996), including a loss of resources from the incomes of those families, a decrease in the presence of families with “mainstream” patterns of norms and behavior, and a loss of families that were more likely to exert pressure within the community for order and safety and to place demands on external actors to provide high-quality goods and services (Wilson 1987).

The most extreme effects of social isolation were experienced in public housing. Originally intended as temporary housing for families facing difficult times, public housing became a permanent home to generations of families with severe economic and social challenges (Bowly 1978; Hirsch 1998; Popkin et al. 2000; Vale 2002; Venkatesh 2000).

The current national attention on mixed-income development is largely due to the high-profile redevelopment of public housing, much of it funded by HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere), a \$5 billion effort launched by the federal government in 1992 to rehabilitate the most severely distressed public housing around the country (Naparstek, Freis, and Kingsley 2000; Popkin et al. 2004; Turbov and Piper 2005a). The redevelopment and design principles that undergird the HOPE VI program draw on the ideas and experience of New Urbanism, a national movement that promotes the planning and design of more diverse and livable communities (Bohl 2000).

The other primary approach being used to deconcentrate poverty and reform public housing consists of dispersal programs, such as the national Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing Demonstration Program and the Gautreaux Assisted Housing Program in Chicago. These efforts focus on facilitating the relocation of residents to lower-poverty communities in the metropolitan area (for a review of dispersal programs, see Varady and Walker 2003). I will reflect on the comparative promise of both approaches later in this article.

Citing a lack of cost-effectiveness, the Bush administration has sought to end the HOPE VI program, influencing the reduction of HOPE VI funds from \$574 million in fiscal year 2002 to \$99 million in fiscal year 2006 and seeking in each of the past four years to eliminate the program altogether (Wayne 2006). Thus far, Congress has continued to fund HOPE VI, though at reduced levels, and in 2005, Senator Barbara Mikulski, the original sponsor of the HOPE VI legislation, proposed a reauthorization bill to fund the program at \$600 million annually for another five years. The bill was referred to committee and, according to the senator's office, is still pending.

Even the program's strongest supporters acknowledge concern with its implementation. Public housing units that have been demolished far outnumber the replacement units that are planned, there have been extended delays in the delivery of replacement units, and resources and strategies to support the residents during the relocation process have been insufficient (Popkin et al. 2004). The legislation proposed by Senator Mikulski attempts to address some of these concerns. Those who support renewed funding for HOPE VI argue that continued federal investment is key to leveraging local resources to invest in large-scale efforts to provide housing for the poor.

Despite the debate at the federal level about future support for mixed-income development, for the time being there continues to be strong public and private sector investment in this approach in cities across the country (Cisneros and Katz 2004; Smith 2002). Thus, even though the expected and actual benefits of mixed-income development are unclear, local investment in this strategy is increasing at a time when public sector budgets are shrinking and demand for affordable urban housing is growing. (For detailed case studies of private sector investment leveraged through mixed-income development in four U.S. cities, see Turbov and Piper 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, and 2005e.) Within this policy context, I suggest that a much more detailed exploration and assessment of the expected benefits of mixed-income development for low-income families is needed.

In this article, I describe four main propositions drawn from social networks, social control, culture and behavior, and political economy of place theories to describe how mixed-income development might improve the quality of life for low-income families. After presenting the theoretical bases for these propositions, I provide a conceptual framework that delineates the pathways through which these effects might occur. I then review the evidence from existing mixed-income research about the relevance of these propositions. Given the scale of the federal HOPE VI program and the literature on its implementation, I pay particular attention to what we have learned from this effort. I draw on information from other mixed-income efforts where possible and

intend for the analysis to be broadly relevant to efforts to develop housing that will attract and retain a socioeconomically diverse population. Finally, I describe the limitations of this approach and consider the policy implications for future mixed-income development.

Four propositions regarding mixed-income development and urban poverty

Social networks as “social capital”

The social networks argument asserts that by attracting higher-income residents back to the inner city, mixed-income development can facilitate the re-establishment of effective social networks and social capital for low-income residents. Granovetter (1973, 1983, 1995) has argued that networks providing people with access to information and opportunities are an important source of upward mobility, particularly for employment. Most important are those relationships—“weak ties” or “bridging social capital”—that provide people with access to resources beyond their networks of close association (see also Briggs 1997; Elliott 1999; Gittel and Vidal 1998; Lin and Dumin 1986; Lin, Vaughn, and Ensel 1981; Stoloff, Glanville, and Bienenstock 1999).

Research has demonstrated that social networks are indeed valuable in securing employment (Granovetter 1995; Lin and Dumin 1986; Lin, Vaughn, and Ensel 1981; Stoloff, Glanville, and Bienenstock 1999). The social networks of lower-income individuals and blacks tend to be more localized than those of people with higher incomes (Campbell and Lee 1992; Elliott 1999; Fischer 1982; Lee, Campbell, and Miller 1991; Oliver 1988). Weak ties appear particularly advantageous for those with lower socioeconomic status (Granovetter 1995; Lin and Dumin 1986; Lin, Vaughn, and Ensel 1981). If mixed incomes are found in a community, lower-income residents may be able to build weak ties with affluent neighbors and thereby improve access to employment networks and other resources.

Studies of how people build networks have shown that although residents of modern urban neighborhoods generally rely less on neighbors for intimate support than in previous eras (Fischer 1982; Fischer et al. 1997; Wellman 1979; Wellman and Leighton 1979), proximity still influences network formation (Fischer 1982; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001; Wellman 1979; Wellman and Wortley 1990) and instrumental support (Chaskin 1997). Studies on the impact of the physical environment on communal relations suggest that opportunities for contact, proximity to others, and appropriate space in which to interact are key factors that can promote and shape social interaction (Fleming, Baum, and Singer 1985; Keane 1991; Wilner, Walkley, and Cook

1952, 1955; Yancey 1972). Thus, it is theorized that mixed-income developments, if appropriately designed, may shape relationships among individual residents. Others have criticized this view, suggesting that spatial determinism only holds where there is real or perceived homogeneity among residents (Michelson 1976; see also Briggs 1997 and Gillis 1983).

Social control

The social control argument posits that the presence of higher-income residents—in particular, homeowners—will lead to higher levels of accountability to norms and rules through increased informal social control and thus to increased order and safety for all residents. The loss of stable, working families from the inner city meant the loss of people who were more likely to exert pressure within the community for order and safety. Effective social control requires interdependent relationships in a community and collective supervision to prevent and address local problems (Coleman 1988; Freudenburg 1986; Janowitz 1975; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Kornhauser 1978; Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and McKay 1969). Another important element of social organization is local participation in formal and voluntary organizations, which builds a community's ability to defend its interests.

Sampson and Groves (1989) have shown that higher levels of socioeconomic status, residential stability, and homeownership lead to increased social organization, which in turn leads to reduced levels of crime and delinquency. Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) found that high socioeconomic status and homeownership were associated with elevated levels of collective efficacy—residents' perceptions of social cohesion and trust among neighbors and the extent to which neighbors are willing to take action on behalf of the community—which in turn was found to be strongly negatively associated with self-reported violence. Thus it is proposed that higher-income residents will be more likely to take action to maintain social control in the community, benefiting residents of all income levels.

Culture and behavior

A third proposition is that the presence of higher-income residents in mixed-income developments will lead other families to adapt more socially acceptable and constructive behavior, including seeking regular work, showing respect for property, and abiding by other social norms. In this way, mixed-income development is a policy response to the hotly debated notion of a "culture of poverty"—the theory that a key factor in the persistence of poverty is the destructive, antisocial habits that have been adopted by many low-

income inner-city families and are counterproductive to their well-being and upward mobility (Auletta 1982; Jencks and Peterson 1991; Kasarda 1990; Lemann 1986a, 1986b; Lewis 1969; Mead 1992; Murray 1984; Wilson 1987). Other scholars have criticized the notion of a culture of poverty as offensive and assert that it unfairly attributes to “culture” what is in fact an adaptation to a structural position in society (Katz 1993; Valentine 1968). Further, the notion of role-modeling by one income group for another risks being seen as demeaning and paternalistic (Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn 1998).

There is an extensive literature that examines neighborhood effects, in particular the impact of living in a neighborhood with a greater proportion of affluent residents (see, for example, Briggs 1997; Ellen and Turner 1997; Galster and Killen 1995; Gephart 1997; Jencks and Mayer 1990b). In general, there is increasing evidence that the presence of middle-class, affluent neighbors benefits low-income children and adolescents in such areas as educational outcomes, health, and sexual activity, although direct effects are relatively small compared with the influence of family-level characteristics (Briggs 1997; Brooks-Gunn et al. 1997; Crane 1991; Datcher 1982; Ellen and Turner 1997; Gephart 1997). The strongest research findings have documented the influence of affluent adults on lower-income children and adolescents, rather than adult-to-adult influence, leading some researchers to focus the hypothesized influence of mixed-income developments on the relations between adults and children (Ellen and Turner 1997; Khadduri and Martin 1997).

To the extent that role-modeling does occur, it could take two different forms. In some cases, behavioral change could happen through distal role-modeling, that is, observing the actions of others, such as a neighbor going to work every day or a neighbor’s children attending school regularly, over time. In other cases, role-modeling may be more proximal, with residents of different income levels interacting directly and role-modeling occurring in a much more intimate way, through direct advice, feedback, and accountability, for example.

The political economy of place

The fourth proposition suggests that the influence of higher-income residents will generate new market demand and political pressure to which external political and economic actors are more likely to respond, thereby leading to higher-quality goods and services available to a cross-section of residents in the community. An important explanation for the conditions in inner-city neighborhoods is the neglect and marginalization of these areas due to a variety of powerful market and political forces at the city, regional, national, and even global levels. In the context of these forces, the absence of residents who

can advocate effectively on behalf of the community, demand high-quality goods and services, and influence public policy is a serious detriment (Crenson 1983; Logan and Molotch 1987; Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995).

Homeowners have a greater vested interest in soliciting public and private investment in the community, and higher-income families will demand better performance from neighborhood schools and other local institutions (Khadhuri 2001; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997). In addition, the greater spending power of higher-income residents should make the community more attractive for retail and commercial development and services such as banking. It can be expected that more affluent residents will bring more personal resources, broader networks of influence, and greater control over their time, thus building the community's capacity to help confront neighborhood challenges and opportunities (Chaskin 2001; Chaskin et al. 2001).

However, while certain improved community amenities may meet the needs of all residents, there may be important instances where the needs and priorities of low-income residents differ from those of other residents. The unequal distribution of influence among residents may lead to community benefits that are not necessarily accessible or valuable to all.

Putting it all together: An ecological framework

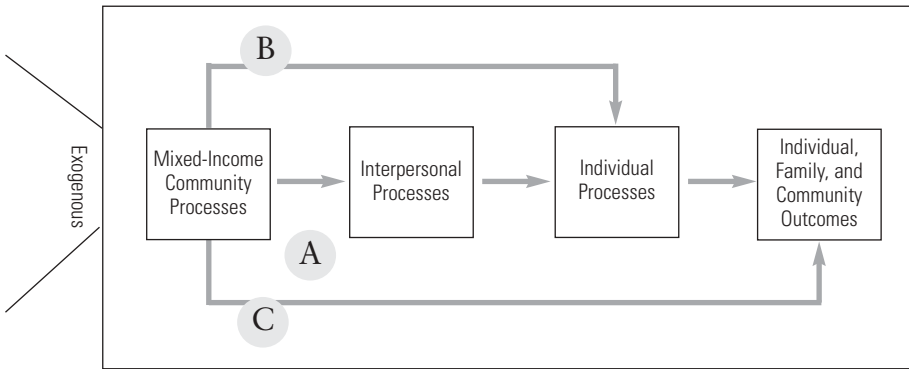
The four propositions having been defined, it is useful to examine them in the context of the relationship between the neighborhood and the individual. For this purpose, I adapt an ecological framework developed by Aber et al. (1997).

The framework presented in figure 1 integrates two major areas of theory—Shaw and McKay's social disorganization theory (1969) (see also Sampson and Morenoff 1997) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) structural-ecological approach to human development—and specifies three levels of context that influence developmental outcomes. Table 1 describes the key processes I hypothesize to be at work at each level of context in a mixed-income environment.

In addition to the levels, three pathways of influence can be delineated (see figure 1):

1. From community processes to interpersonal processes to individual processes to individual and family outcomes (Pathway A)
2. From community processes to individual processes to outcomes (Pathway B)
3. From community processes directly to individual outcomes (Pathway C)

Figure 1. Effects of a Mixed-Income Context



Source: Adapted from Aber et al. 1997, 45.

Table 1. Level of Neighborhood Context and Mixed-Income Processes

Level	Mixed-Income Processes
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased social control that promotes greater accountability to social norms Individual and collective leveraging of external resources The generation of a culture of work and social responsibility
Interpersonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction across income levels, including information sharing, the building of social networks, and role-modeling
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior modification (self-regulation, use of time, job search methods), change in aspirations, and sense of efficacy

Table 2 provides examples of how the pathways might work in practice and demonstrates that each proposition can be hypothesized to work through different combinations of the pathways of influence.

An important point to note is that only Pathway A requires direct interpersonal interaction across income levels. Thus, even *without* social interaction, a theoretical case can be made for the benefit of mixed-income housing for low-income residents. This is significant since, as we shall see, the assumption that such interaction can be easily facilitated through mixed-income housing is open to serious question. It is also important to note that just as there may be benefits to living in a mixed-income development, such a move also has potentially significant costs. Challenges for low-income families could include a loss of existing support networks, an increased sense of stigma and isolation, and the negative effects of a sense of relative deprivation.

Table 2. Mixed-Income Propositions and Pathways of Influence

Proposition	Pathway(s)	Description
Social networks	A	Proximity and interpersonal contact at the community level provide opportunities for social interaction between residents of different income levels and backgrounds. Social interaction leads to the building of familiarity and trust and eventually to the exchange of information and resources that support individual processes such as employment search. Enhanced individual processes lead to improved individual, family, and community outcomes such as higher employment and greater self-sufficiency.
Social control	A	New and strengthened interpersonal relationships among particular individuals lead to greater accountability to each other and to others whom they both know, such as their children. People who commit a delinquent act while in these new networks are more likely to be recognized and held accountable by others. Less delinquent behavior leads to improved outcomes, such as fewer arrests and lower rates of incarceration for people in those networks.
	B	Increased social control at the community level as a whole and an increased collective sense of vigilance on behalf of the community promote individual behavior modification among those previously inclined to delinquency and crime. As noted, abstaining from these activities reduces contact with the criminal justice system.
	C	Greater social control at the community level promotes greater neighborhood safety and reduced crime, which directly improve the quality of life for individuals and families.
Culture and behavior	A	Proximity and interpersonal contact at the community level provide opportunities for social interaction, which may include proximal role-modeling.* Individuals modify their behaviors based on the direct influence and mentoring of others, and these modified behaviors lead to improved outcomes, such as school achievement and better employment.
	B	The socioeconomic diversity in the community creates a dominant culture of work and social responsibility. This leads to distal role-modeling whereby the actions and routines of more affluent families are observed at a distance and emulated by others. As in other pathways, individual behavior modification in turn leads to improved individual outcomes, as well as greater self-sufficiency among families and reduced illicit activity at the community level.
Political economy of place	C	Individual and collective leveraging of external resources leads to higher-quality local services and infrastructure, thus directly promoting an improved quality of life for local residents.

* By the definition used here, proximal role-modeling requires direct interaction, as distinct from distal role-modeling, which involves observing and emulating the actions of others from a distance.

The relevance of these propositions in mixed-income developments

Research on the past decade of mixed-income development in the United States is quite limited. Drawing on case studies of HOPE VI developments, comparative studies of mixed-income developments, and other available research, I will now assess the four propositions in light of the nation's experience thus far.

Social networks

Current evidence about the formation of social networks across income levels is limited and inconclusive. Most studies have found little interaction across income levels at mixed-income developments (Brophy and Smith 1997; Buron et al. 2002; Hogan 1996; Mason 1997; Ryan et al. 1974). However, the two most comprehensive studies of social interaction in mixed-income developments to date—Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn's (1998) study of Lake Parc Place in Chicago and Kleit's (2005) study of the New Holly HOPE VI development in Seattle—did find evidence of neighboring relationships across income levels. However, both developments have important characteristics that prevent generalization.

At Lake Parc Place, units were reserved for low-income and moderate-income residents, and there were no market-rate units. Sixty percent of the moderate-income residents had lived in public housing before and therefore had a shared life experience with the residents of the public housing units. At New Holly, Kleit (2005) found that proximity within the development and shared attributes (ethnicity, language, education, marital status, owner/renter status) were associated with higher levels of social ties. She also found that children in the household can act as bridges to other families with children. Community facilities and activities were relatively well attended by the full range of residents of the mixed-income development. However, New Holly has a unique level of diversity; the development is home to whites, blacks, and new immigrants from Southeast Asia and East Africa. Families living in the development speak 12 different languages.

Only limited empirical evidence so far supports the proposition that mixed-income development will lead to changes in residents' social networks. Most studies have found little interaction across income levels, and those that have found such interaction have not been able to demonstrate that it has led to information about jobs or other resources (Brophy and Smith 1997; Smith 2002).

Social control

The available evidence is inconclusive about whether increased levels of social control have been observed in existing mixed-income developments and, if so, what the source of that increased control is. On the basis of their surveys of residents, Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn (1998) found that the higher-income residents at Lake Parc Place provided strong support for rules and enforcement. Only 5.4 percent of the moderate-income residents felt that there were too many rules, but 26.8 percent of the low-income residents felt that way. And while only 3.6 percent of the moderate-income residents felt

that management was too strict, 12.5 percent of the low-income residents felt that way. However, in their study of eight HOPE VI sites, Buron et al. (2002) found no difference in the levels of social control reported by public housing residents of HOPE VI sites, Housing Choice Voucher Program apartments, unsubsidized apartments, and public housing developments. The one exception was that control of graffiti was perceived to be significantly lower in public housing sites. Smith (2002) reports that according to his conversations with property managers and developers, strong property management seemed relatively more important for social control than residents' actions. It may be that the combination of strong management and more active informal control by residents is the most effective means of maintaining social order. Although empirical evidence for increased social organization in mixed-income communities is very limited, the strong empirical evidence for the impact of socioeconomic status, homeownership, and residential stability on informal social control in more general neighborhood studies makes this proposition compelling (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997).

Culture and behavior

In addition to the controversial nature of the proposition about role-modeling and behavior, it is a very difficult phenomenon to measure empirically. There is no evidence in the limited research on mixed-income developments as to whether role-modeling is taking place and, if so, what effect it has. Residents with whom Mason (1997) spoke, for example, downplayed the importance of modeling (see also Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn 1998). When they surveyed residents of mixed-income developments about social opinions and lifestyle values, Ryan et al. found that "contrary to conventional wisdom, people at different income levels display pretty much the same distribution of values, social attitudes, and lifestyles" (1974, 22). While there is certainly a difference between holding a value and acting on it, there may well be less to be gained from income mixing in terms of changing values than is assumed. Lower-income residents answered only one question on Ryan et al.'s (1974) survey differently from higher-income residents. The question asked whether the respondent agreed with the statement that the only significant difference between poor people and the rest of society is that the poor do not have as much money. Ryan et al. (1974) report that while low-income residents tended to agree with this statement, higher-income residents did not, thus suggesting that low-income residents would not subscribe to the proposition that they would benefit from using higher-income residents as role models. This raises the question referenced earlier by Valentine (1968) as to whether inner-

city residents are isolated from mainstream values or simply from mainstream opportunities. Further, if there is a benefit to role-modeling, perhaps it lies in modeling life skills rather than in modeling values.

Although the presence of middle-class role models has become a fundamental and commonly accepted rationale for mixed-income development, my review raises serious questions about the relative importance of this proposition. It is possible that distal role-modeling is more prevalent than proximal, one-on-one interactions across income levels. Certainly it seems more likely that role-modeling from adults to children will be more readily observed than role-modeling between adults.

The political economy of place

No research on mixed-income developments examines the role of higher-income residents in leveraging external resources. In his interviews with developers and property managers, Smith (2002) found some evidence that market pressure ensures that development properties are well maintained. On the basis of his review of other literature on urban development, Smith asserts: "Much research has shown that attracting non-poor households to a community is critically important to creating a market for services...and exerting political power to improve municipal services" (2002, 26). With regard to private services, the argument is not that higher-income residents directly leverage private investments and services, although some may work through local community organizations and government officials to lobby for particular investments. It is more likely that market actors will respond to the presence of higher-income residents and increase investments in neighborhoods and their services. Despite a lack of empirical evidence, this proposition remains a compelling argument for mixed-income development based on expectations that homeowners will have greater residential stability, participation in community organizations, likelihood of voting, and spending power.

Assessment of propositions based on available evidence

In my review, I do not find compelling evidence for the propositions about network formation and role-modeling through social interaction across income levels. In the short term at least, these pathways are unlikely to hold much promise as a way to improve individual and family outcomes for low-income residents. Over time, depending on the level of residential stability in mixed-income developments and the level of investment in activities that promote social interaction, we may see higher levels of relationship building that lead to benefits for low-income residents. Eventually, role-modeling of a

more distal nature among adults, as well as more proximal role-modeling between adults and children, may take place.

However, given the evidence cited earlier, I find the propositions that the presence of higher-income residents will lead to greater informal social control and improved community attributes much more compelling. Higher-income residents, particularly homeowners, will likely be more stringent about upholding rules and regulations and promoting informal social control. We can certainly expect that, with a mixed-income constituency, the market and external institutions will respond differently to demands for higher-quality goods and services. The limited available empirical evidence thus indicates that propositions relating to social control and political economy of place hold more promise at this time.

Policy implications

The need to clarify expectations

Policy makers and developers should be urged to be clearer about their expectations and priorities for any mixed-income development they undertake. Is the motivation for the development to revitalize the local area and provide additional housing options for urban dwellers, to provide low-income residents with higher-quality housing, to help lift low-income families out of poverty, or some combination of the three? Unless the motivation for mixed-income development is clearer, the ability to evaluate the success of this approach, compare various design and development strategies, and advise policy makers and implementers on relative values and the most effective means of promotion is somewhat limited.

The need to lower expectations

There is a tremendous amount of hyperbole about and hope for mixed-income development. My analysis suggests that we should lower our expectations about its impact on low-income residents. Short- to medium-term effects in terms of social order and increased quality of goods and services seem to be reasonable. The new developments seem certain to improve the overall living environment for the low-income families that move in and thus will have an indirect effect on their well-being. However, it is also possible that low-income families may experience significant personal and familial challenges in the new environment, including social isolation, stigma, a sense of relative deprivation, increased scrutiny, and competition with more affluent residents for scarce local resources (Briggs 1997; Jencks and Mayer 1990b).

Further, mixed-income development alone cannot reasonably be expected to promote more direct effects such as behavioral change and substantial gains in employment and self-sufficiency. Promoting sustainable changes in the lives of low-income residents who move from neighborhoods with concentrated poverty to mixed-income developments will generally require combining housing with investments in social services, education, job readiness, training and placement, and transportation. Moreover, it will require, above all, attention to more fundamental structural barriers that constrain access to opportunity by race and class.

Housing design

For those mixed-income developments where social interaction is an explicit priority, there seems to be great potential to think creatively about design in order to facilitate more interaction among residents. Drawing on New Urbanist ideas, developers can prioritize the physical integration of various unit types; the avoidance of characteristics that would make the units of residents with different income levels distinguishable from the outside; the incorporation of comfortable and accessible shared space such as hallways, walkways, courtyards, and other common areas; and the creation of common civic space such as parks, community centers, and libraries (Barnett 2003; Katz 1994; Leccese and McCormick 1999).

Community building

Existing research suggests that simply sharing the same space will not build the level of interaction needed to promote the meaningful exchange of information and support. Property managers and others responsible for the ongoing oversight of developments must decide how much to invest in actively facilitating interpersonal connections to help residents identify areas of common interest. Events—such as cookouts, potlucks, community meetings, and celebrations—may be important venues for bringing residents into the same space and providing an opportunity for repeated interaction and relationship building. The formation of resident organizations such as block clubs and civic associations is another important means of building meaningful bonds. Also important is the role of local institutions such as schools, day care centers, and recreational facilities to the extent they can be expressly designed, financed, and managed to serve families with a range of income levels.

Income mix

We have much to learn about the implications of various proportions of residents of different income levels within a development, but we can be certain that the mix affects outcomes. The higher the proportion of low-income and subsidized residents, the greater the contribution to the city's stock of quality affordable housing. The higher the proportion of homeowners and market-rate renters, the more revenue there is to finance the development, the greater the residential and social stability, and the greater the expected subsequent investment in services. To the extent that promoting social interaction is an important goal, it appears that interaction is more easily generated among residents of proximal income levels—low-income and moderate-income for example. This suggests that including a moderate-income tier may help facilitate social interaction across income levels.

Mixed-income versus dispersal strategies

Despite the need to lower short-term expectations for mixed-income development, this strategy appears no less promising than dispersal programs, such as the national Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing Demonstration Program (Goering and Feins 2003; Orr et al. 2003) and the Gautreaux Assisted Housing Program in Chicago (Rosenbaum 1995; Rosenbaum et al. 1991), the other current policy alternatives for deconcentrating poverty and reforming public housing. (For a review of dispersal programs, see Varady and Walker 2003.) Available research indicates that the clearest benefit of dispersal programs for low-income families is increased community safety and order—the same benefit we expect from mixed-income developments. But a key difference is that dispersal programs benefit only those households that move out of high-poverty areas. Mixed-income developments may benefit all residents of the neighborhood receiving the development, although it is possible that the greatest benefits may accrue to the lower-income residents of the development itself. While we do not expect a significant impact on earnings for residents of mixed-income developments, dispersal strategies have so far failed to demonstrate any impact on earnings either. Both strategies require families to adapt to new environments and establish new social networks, but families in mixed-income developments have the advantage of remaining in the inner city and living in close proximity to other low-income families.

Criticisms of the mixed-income approach, particularly the HOPE VI program, include the reduction of units available for low-income families, the substantial costs of redevelopment, and extensive delays in construction and unit delivery. However, dispersal programs face significant administrative and

political challenges of their own, including resistance from suburban communities, that make it difficult to take that approach to scale. In this light, mixed-income development seems an important component of a response to urban poverty and should continue to be explored.

Toward a comprehensive strategy for housing the urban poor

As a strategy for meeting the needs of the urban poor, mixed-income development has some important limitations. While it holds promise as a way to provide housing quality and residential stability, it cannot, in and of itself, address the major barriers to self-sufficiency—unstable employment, limited education and work skills, problematic credit history, and health challenges—experienced by many low-income families (Bohl 2000). As Popkin and her colleagues conclude from their review of the HOPE VI program:

[W]hile it is clearly feasible to create a healthy mixed-income development that will attract higher-income tenants and provide a pleasant and safe community for all residents, it remains less clear what conditions are required to ensure that living in these communities will have substantial payoffs for the social and economic status of low-income families over the long term. (2004, 23–24)

In particular, as Cunningham, Popkin, and Burt (2005) note, the urban poor include a substantial proportion of families that could be termed “hard-to-house,” meaning that their personal circumstances present major challenges to retaining their housing. These challenges include employability, substance abuse, mental health, or criminal background issues, as well as family demands related to a physical disability, elderly status, or grandparents caring for grandchildren in the absence of the parents.

Only a very small proportion of low-income residents will be able to move into mixed-income developments. Not only is there a substantial net loss of public housing units across the country due to the federal government’s elimination of the one-for-one replacement requirement in 1995, but in many cases stringent screening criteria for residence in the new developments excludes most of the local public housing population (Venkatesh et al. 2004). Popkin et al. (2000) make the vital observation that mixed-income developments will be unavailable to many of the most challenged families among the urban poor.

Conclusion

We must continue efforts to end the decades of social isolation for the poor and the resulting concentration of poverty effects that have limited the life chances of generations of inner-city residents of color. Through the mechanisms outlined here—increased informal social control, more effective demand for local services and amenities, and perhaps exposure to a broader range of possibilities for youth—mixed-income development appears to be a strategy that can improve the quality of life for many low-income families. There is still much to be learned about the challenges of living in mixed-income developments and the extent to which benefits beyond improved environmental conditions are experienced.

However, while promising in some significant ways, mixed-income development can be only one component of a more comprehensive strategy for housing poor families. To fully address the increasing shortage of affordable housing for the urban poor, complementary efforts are needed to improve housing conditions in high-poverty neighborhoods and to facilitate moves to low-poverty areas of the city (Briggs 2005). These might include the increased availability of well-maintained public and subsidized housing with access to strong supportive services and strategies to connect the residents to resources in the surrounding neighborhoods. Deconcentration efforts, through the Housing Choice Voucher Program, for example, can be strengthened through stronger support and oversight of landlords and more resources to support families' search for housing and ongoing housing stability.

Producing thousands of units of mixed-income housing nationwide has required a great deal of vision, creativity, and persistence on the part of the public and private sectors. This same level of ambition and commitment will be needed not only to stay the course, but also to determine how to enhance and complement current approaches for maximal impact on low-income households across the country.

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